

Health, Social Security & Housing Scrutiny Panel

PUBLIC MEETING

Date: 27th July 2010
Meeting 4

Present	Deputy G.P. Southern (Chairman) Deputy D.J. De Sousa
Apologies	Connétable D. Mezbourian
In attendance	Mrs. C. Le Quesne, Scrutiny Officer Mr. S. Le Quesne, Scrutiny Officer

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
	<p>1. Records of previous meetings</p> <p>The Panel approved the minutes of private and public meetings of the Panel as previously constituted dated the 28th June 2010, 13th and 19th July 2010.</p>	
	<p>2. Vice Chairman</p> <p>The Panel recalled that it had previously agreed to defer the appointment. It decided that, as not all members had been available for the meeting the decision would be recorded following an electronic meeting to be held at the earliest opportunity.</p>	GS
	<p>3. Action updates</p> <p>The Panel noted the action updates from previous meetings and requested the following actions -</p> <p>a) that Deputy De Sousa had attended a meeting with the Head of Health Protection and the Registration and Inspection Manager to discuss the Regulation of Care (Jersey) Law 200-. The Panel was provided with an overview of the key issues relating to the development of the legislation and it was noted that the surrounding issues covered the whole of the Panels remit;</p> <p>b) that a Hearing with the Minister for Housing be scheduled for the 7th September 2010 from 11.30 a.m. - 1.00 p.m. to discuss future plans for the Department and the outcomes of the Whitehead consultation, issues relating to the allocation of 'j' category licenses and adaptations for people with disabilities;</p> <p>c) that further follow up be undertaken to obtain information previously requested from the Social Security Department relating to the Social Security Advisory Council and any other issues which remained outstanding; and,</p> <p>d) that, the necessary follow up be undertaken to obtain an update from the Minister for Social Security on action taken by his department following the recommendations made in SR5.2009.</p>	<p>CLQ</p> <p>CLQ</p> <p>CLQ</p> <p>CLQ</p>

<p>510/3(2)</p>	<p>4. Chairmen's Committee - Citizenship Programme</p> <p>The Chairman advised that he had not attended the last meeting of the Chairmen's Committee.</p> <p>The Panel noted the difficulties faced by members in prioritizing commitments to attend the Citizenship Programme due to the late release of the schedule of dates. It commented that it believed that some of the reluctance pupils showed in participating might have resulted from the topic selected and their difficulty in relating to an issue such as Long Term Care of the Elderly. In addition, it was suggested that more emphasis on the function of Scrutiny and its role within Government would help to clarify the purpose of the exercise to the pupils. The Panel believed that a Scrutiny member should give such explanations. The Chairman requested that the Chairmen's Committee be advised of the Panel's view.</p> <p>The Panel was reminded that a Sub-Panel was undertaking a review on Political Education and that it would be advised of the views expressed.</p>	<p>SLQ</p>
<p>13.07.10 Item 8</p> <p>517/14(8)</p>	<p>5. Review of the Use of Discretion</p> <p>The Panel recalled that it had agreed to complete its report and proposition at the earliest opportunity. The Chairman advised that he would liaise with the officer to complete the drafting of the report and circulate the final version for Panel approval electronically.</p>	<p>GS/ SLQ</p>
<p>510/3(5)</p>	<p>6. Scrutiny Matters Edition 7</p> <p>The Panel received a paper dated 19th July 2010 relating to Chairmen's Committee decisions on the Scrutiny Matters newsletter</p> <p>The Panel considered what it might include in its report for the 7th edition. It was reminded that its Review of Benefit Levels had featured significantly in the last newsletter and noted that it might also wish to include a report on its Dental Review, the Use of Discretion within the Social Security Department or its work on the Corporate Spending Review in the next edition. The Panel agreed to further consider its newsletter priorities at a subsequent meeting.</p>	
<p>510/1(28)</p>	<p>7. Home Life Exhibition</p> <p>The Panel received a paper dated 19th July 2010 prepared for the Chairmen Committee relating to the Home Life Exhibition to be held between the 12th and 14th November 2010.</p> <p>The Panel noted the dates and agreed to assist in raising the profile of Scrutiny and provide an opportunity to collect evidence for reviews.</p>	
<p>Item 5 13.07.10 513/27(8)</p>	<p>8. Comprehensive Spending Review</p> <p>The Panel considered responses to questions it had submitted to the departments within its remit and decided to submit additional questions with a view to amending the Business Plan with regard to the following subjects -</p> <p>Social Security</p> <p>Housing Adaptations</p> <p>The Panel expressed some concern that 50 per cent of the Housing Adaptations budget was proposed as part of the 2 per cent</p>	<p>CLQ/S LQ</p>

	<p>Comprehensive Spending Review cuts for 2011. It requested that the relevant departments and community service providers be asked supplementary questions about the referral process, the implications of any reduction in assistance for eligible individuals and access to the funds. The Panel agreed that it would prepare an amendment to the States Business Plan seeking the removal of Housing Adaptations from the 2 per cent cuts.</p> <p>GST Bonus The Panel recalled that the introduction of the GST bonus had been agreed by the States to mitigate some of the effects on relatively low-income families following the inclusion of GST on food. The Panel was concerned that the removal of the bonus was particularly untimely especially as no indication had been given by the Minister for Treasury and Resources if or to what extent GST might be raised. The Chairman agreed to give the matter further consideration and to advise the Panel of his thinking at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Health and Social Services</p> <p>Diabetes The Panel noted that the proposed increased user pays approach relating to diabetic care and the related medical supplies required by patients. Whilst the potential savings may comply with user pays policies, the cost implications to the individual and the possible subsequent impact for patients who may not undertake adequate monitoring were issues of concern. The officers were requested to clarify the costs and services included in the proposal and to prepare a draft report and proposition as an amendment to the States Business Plan to ensure that funding was not remove from diabetic care. Deputy De Sousa agreed to lead on this amendment.</p> <p>Pharmacy - out of hours cover The Panel noted the response to its questions relating to the proposed savings to be achieved through cutting out of hours pharmacy cover at the general hospital. The Panel was extremely concerned that the cut in cover was being considered given that a risk to patients was acknowledged. Whilst the Panel accepted that savings were required it appeared that as 45 per cent of out of hours calls to the pharmacy occur on a Sunday the reduction could place additional pressure on already busy professionals.</p> <p>The Panel requested further information on -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how medical staff would access information about medication in the absence of access to a pharmacist; • who would be responsible for ordering the additional drugs; • how would safety on the ward be increased to ensure security due to carrying increased quantities of drugs on wards; and, • whether cost analysis had been undertaken on the costs of not discharging patients if the necessary medication were not available on the ward. <p>The Panel agreed that it would prepare an amendment to the States Business Plan seeking the removal of reducing the out of hours pharmacy cover from the 2 per cent cuts.</p>	<p>CLQ/S LQ</p> <p>GS</p> <p>DDS/ CLQ/S LQ</p> <p>CLQ/S LQ</p>
--	---	--

	<p>Non-essential surgery</p> <p>The Panel noted that a decision was proposed to assist in meeting an overall 2 per cent saving required from the department by the CSR, without providing any information as to the exact surgical procedures to be discontinued.</p> <p>It requested a detailed list as to the type of surgery, which would fall within the category of 'non essential'. The Panel agreed that it would prepare an amendment to the States Business Plan seeking the removal of non-essential surgery from the 2 per cent cuts.</p>	<p>CLQ/S LQ</p>
<p>Item 5 13.07.10 513/27(8)</p>	<p>9. Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR)</p> <p>The Panel recalled that following its last meeting its draft proposition to amend P.99/2010 relating to the removal of posts in child and adolescent mental health services and the alcohol and drug service as part of the 2011 two per cent savings required by the CSR had been lodged 'au Greffe'.</p> <p>The Panel decided that it would re-issue the proposition in order that new information supplied by the Alcohol and Drug Service could be included in the attached report.</p> <p>The officer was requested to take the necessary action.</p>	<p>SLQ</p>
<p>Item 6 13.07.10 517/8(8)</p>	<p>10. Dental Review</p> <p>The Panel received an update on the Dental Review from Deputy D. De Sousa in her capacity as lead member. It was advised that the hearing with the Minister for Health and Social Services had been productive and that the necessary arrangements for the forthcoming hearing with the Minister for Social Security were in place.</p> <p>The Panel was advised that the format for the report was becoming clearer and that a number of themes had become apparent from both the number of written submissions and the evidence received at the aforementioned hearing.</p> <p>The lead member would work closely with the officer to produce a report for the Panel's consideration and presentation to the States during August. Deputy De Sousa would liaise with the media on the release of the report as appropriate.</p>	
<p>Item 7 13.07.10 517/13(8)</p>	<p>11. Income Support: Sub-Panel Review of Benefit Levels</p> <p>The Panel received an update on Review of Benefit Levels from the Chairman. It was advised that the Review was currently awaiting an updated report from its advisor Dr. M. Evans. Subsequent to the receipt of that report and the additional information requested from Social Security the Chairman would develop the heads of report with the officer.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that he anticipated that some drafting could take place in the next two weeks. He advised that meetings for stakeholders with the advisors present were still planned and that details would be finalized at the next Sub-Panel meeting.</p>	<p>ME/GS /CLQ</p>

	<p>On a related matter, the Chairman advised that he had been advised that correspondence had been sent from Social Security to recipients of the transitional protection. Some recipients were facing significant cuts in payments, which would be difficult for them to accommodate, particularly those in receipt of pensions.</p> <p>The Panel decided to ask the following questions -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how many letters had been sent to recipients? • how many individuals had been advised that their transitional protection was to be reduced? • what was the scale of reduction? • which income levels were being affected? • when would recipients be advised of 2011 cuts in transitional protection payments? • what level of reduction was planned for 2011? and, • did the July 2010 letters advising of the cuts include the annual October rise in benefits within the reduction of transitional protection payments? <p>The officer was directed to take the necessary action.</p>	
517/1(30)	<p>12. Topic Proposals from the Public</p> <p>The Panel considered a topic proposal from a member of the public relating to housing adaptations for people with disabilities.</p> <p>The Panel decided that it would consider the subject as part of its work programme at its first September meeting. The Panel requested that the member be advised of its decision and that they be advised of its intention to pursue the removal of the proposed 50 per cent cut to the Housing Adaptations budget as part of the 2 per cent CSR cuts in the form of an amendment to the States Annual Business</p>	CLQ
	<p>13. Future meetings</p> <p>It was agreed that the next Panel meeting would be the 7th September 2010 at 9.30 a.m. in Le Capelain Room.</p>	